DEMAND XVII—EDUCATION—GOVERNMENT GRANT TO THE TRAVANCORE UNIVERSITY.

MR. H. C. PAPWORTH *(Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Travancore University)*: Sir, I rise to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 22,45,000 under Demand XVII—Education—Government Grant to the Travancore University.

MR. V. K. VELAPPAN NAIR: Sir, I rise to move:

"To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 22,45,000 under Demand XVII by Re. 1."

I am moving this motion in order to bring to the notice of the authorities concerned the difficulties experienced by students who are admitted in the University Colleges in getting proper accommodation in the College hostels. Sir, this is a matter which has been brought to the notice of this House and Government during the last Budget session and the Government then replied that proper action will be taken immediately to meet that situation.

I remember to have been informed that proper action will be taken to meet the situation and that buildings will be taken on rent if found necessary and that more accommodation will be provided to the students in the University Colleges. Sir, this year it was a matter of great concern to the guardians to secure admission to the colleges. Having secured that admission, it has become a greater concern to procure proper residential accommodation for the students. I was here when the colleges reopened. I saw a number of guardians roaming about, anxious to secure admission for their wards in the hostels. The condition of girl students who were admitted in the women's colleges is more serious. I came to know from some of my friends, whose daughters were admitted in the Women's college, that many were refused admission in the college hostel and they are put to very great trouble in finding proper residence to their children. It is the duty of the college authorities to see that accommodation is provided for as many students as possible. At present it is supposed that about 900 students in the City are living with their parents. If I remember correct, there was a hue and cry when the admissions were closed in the University Colleges that proper consideration was not shown to those who were in the City. To those students whose guardians were in the City no preference was shown by the college authorities even in the case of students who are permanent residents in the City. If the statement that 900 students are residing with their parents in the City is correct, the other version cannot be true. So naturally the inference that the statement given by the guardians that the wards are put up with the parents in the City will not be correct.

PRESIDENT: What is the idea? I should like the honourable member to repeat it.

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MR. V. K. VELAPPAN NAIR: Sir, there is a column in the application form that as regards the arrangement for the boarding of the applicant, some relationship will be traced with somebody in the City just to procure admission to the college. Now it is a serious matter and I wish that at least now the matter will be attended to with all the seriousness it deserves. With these words I move this motion.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Sir, in supporting the motion of Mr. Velappan Nair, I have to urge the same thing as Mr. Velappan Nair was doing, that is, the matter of accommodating students in the City. Even last year, an adjournment motion was moved and then it was stated that immediate steps will be taken to have a good building put up. But it is reported that it is only just now that an attempt for the construction of the building has taken place. It is pitiable that the primary requirement of our student population has not been met in that respect. It is stated in the annual report that 900 women and 1800 men students live in the City out of 2900 students in the University. For this, the University hostel accommodates only 107 men students and 69 women students. There are also other hostels in the City which accommodate about 316 men students and 251 women students. Even this is overcrowded. Every private hostel which accommodates men or women students are overcrowded. I have seen students in a crowded room which can ordinarily accommodate only two students, with four or five of them crowded together. It is thus a pitiable state which I want to urge on the attention of this House. Now at least 300 or 400 students more must be supplied with accommodation by the Government. That is my request.

Another point I have to say about is the freedom of the students. Of course, it may be said that it must not be urged here. But anyway I have to mention that.

PRESIDENT: Knowing that this is a general cut, you can speak on that.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Now, an order has been issued that the students should not take part in meetings outside the college premises.

PRESIDENT: I think it is well understood that students are entitled to have students' meetings inside and outside the college. The idea is that they should not take part in any public meetings or public agitations.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Sir, but my request is that a narrow interpretation should not be put on that matter.

PRESIDENT: The honourable member should consider the alternative. Once any student goes to a public meeting, and especially when he not only attends the meeting but takes part in it, what will happen? The honourable member knows very well that under the various conditions that exist in Indian political affairs today, the speeches that are made at public meetings are likely to unsettle his career. I have made it perfectly clear, and I think the honourable members are aware that the University has made it the rule that

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[President.]

within the walls of the University, the students can say anything, can speak on any matter and are given the fullest latitude. There is no objection whatsoever shown in that case. But once they go out, then, A might say something and B might say something and the students may be tempted to start discussions. As a matter of fact, what has taken place recently has borne witness to this state of affairs. Once a student in an unripe state of mind goes to attend public meetings, it may tempt him to go further into political or other activities which may spell ruin to his career. This is completely assented to on every side. Mahatma Gandhi has said so; the Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University and the Bombay Premier have said so. It is granted there that students should not take part in any public agitation or meeting.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Sir, I fully endorse the view of the University. I fully endorse the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi. There is no question about it. But the interpretation put on the word 'activity of the student'.....

PRESIDENT: The whole point is that the student should not take part in any public meeting. Whether suddenly and on the spur of the moment he might say something, is a matter difficult to define. Of course, it is absolutely clear that no University will pass any rule that a student should not attend a public meeting. The whole question is that he should not participate as mover of a resolution or as president or speaker and so forth, or take part in the actual work or conduct of the meeting.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Can a student conduct the meeting outside the college premises?

MR. H. C. PAPWORTH: Sir, briefly the idea is that he can do so if it is a student meeting.

PRESIDENT: Supposing a students' meeting gets a big crowd of people who are absolutely unconnected with the problems of education. The crowd will start creating troubles. Honourable members will realise the limit in this matter. Students can within their college premises call for any meeting and speak on any matter. They may move any resolution. But they cannot have a public meeting where others than students attend. That they cannot do.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Can they have their own political discussion?

PRESIDENT: Yes, whoever doubts that? For instance, honourable members will realise that in University Unions in Oxford and Cambridge, they pass extreme things like, abolition of property; abolition of the ordinary system of marriage in the churches. They pass resolution that any two people living together should be recognised as husband and wife; that monarchy should be abolished, that the British King is an anachronism—all these things have been moved and I have stated that whether it is Communism or any other 'ism', within the walls of the University, the students can discuss those subjects. The political discussions of the students should be confined to the discussions within the University Union.

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MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: It is very well if the interpretation of the rule is as you have stated it to be. But it is not interpreted like that.

PRESIDENT: Is it not so, Mr. Pro-Vice-Chancellor?

MR. H. C. PAPWORTH: Sir, I may briefly state that there is no change in the interpretation of the rules. The students may take part in any meeting of a political character provided that the meeting is confined to the members of the University. Press Reporters are not allowed at these meetings. Naturally, those meetings should be in the University buildings.

MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: Sir, what I say is that they should be allowed to convene the meetings outside the college if they want.

Then, I should like to say a few words about the Research Department. I was recently talking to my teacher Dr. Moudgill about the inefficiency of the entire Research Department. He was urging upon me that they were giving much advice to the Government and even to the Fertilisers and Chemicals. I may say that if that is the case in regard to the Governmental need and the needs of the industries, the needs of the ordinary people have not been adequately satisfied by the Research Department.

PRESIDENT: Order, order. In this matter I would ask the honourable member to bear with me for a few minutes. Naturally, the work of the Research Department does not come into the light of the day. As one honourable member—I think it was Mr. K. A. Mathew—put it, there should be a complete examination of what has been done in the Research Department of the Government. The Government have therefore arrived at the conclusion that some of the foremost scientists in India should be appointed as a Commission to go into the whole problem of the Research Department of the University and make a report. In order that I may assure the honourable members, I may say that quite recently the Government of India sent out, for the purpose of certain other investigations, two of their most eminent scientific representatives, *viz.*, Sir Santhi Swaroop Bhatnagar and Mr. Wadia. I think the honourable members will be glad to learn that Sir Santhi Swaroop Bhatnagar told me, and I think he is going to put that in writing, that nowhere in India was research so devoted to the amelioration of industrial and agricultural good as in this State. Coming as it does from such an eminent person, I think it is very complimentary indeed. I think he is putting on record what he has found in Travancore.

I may inform that a commission will be appointed to examine the research activities here. In fact, the members of the commission have been nominated and letters have been written to them asking them to come here and examine our research activities. After the fullest possible scrutiny they will make a report and then the honourable members will see what work is done here. They will then know what they have achieved and what other people, the foremost scientific men in India, think of our research department.

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MR. K. K. CHELLAPPAN PILLAI: What I urge is that it must be made useful to the people in general. Of course I am very glad to find what Mr. Bhatnagar has stated with regard to research.

Then I have to say one thing about the Technological Department. The Department of Textile Technology, since its inception, has not developed and it has not made any advance. Not even a good library exists and the certificate also is not very much recognized. It is the report I have got. There is no efficient staff to manage it. In this state of things either it should be mended or it should be ended. That is my request to the Government. If the Government cannot improve it in any way they would rather close it up. Of course I want to say that it is better that we mend it. In the wake of the large expansion of the textile industries, it may be of use to our students. Every possible attempt should be made to improve it. With these words I close.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: Sir, I am in full agreement with what my friends Mr. Velappan Nair and Mr. Chellappan Pillai said regarding hostel accommodation for students. I need not say that in these days when it is difficult to get accommodation and food it is absolutely necessary that the Government should take greater attention in this matter than it is doing at present.

As regards the question of research I may be permitted to offer some comments. No doubt as a layman this is a very difficult subject for me to understand and to safely comment upon. I am fully alive to the fact that the results of Departments like the Research Department cannot be judged from the work of a few years. I certainly cannot agree with Mr. Chellappan Pillai that the Research Department must be ended. It certainly must be mended, for the future of our country must depend to a very large extent upon the results turned out by the Department.

DR. K. L. MOUDGILL (*Director of Research*): Sir, it was not suggested that the Research Department be ended. He was talking about another institution.

MR T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: My ears have not deceived me. I heard it said that it must be either mended or ended. (A voice: it was about the Department of Textile Technology.) Then I am sorry. But I am not for ending that Department. We cannot afford to end any department of this type for our future necessarily depends in the growth of nation building departments like these. Holding such views as I do I am emphatically of opinion that greater attention must be paid to this subject than it has been done in the past. One thing I cannot console myself with and it is this. The results that have been turned out thus far are not very satisfactory. At least in the judgment of a layman like me the results which have been achieved by 1120, set forth *in extenso* in the annual report published by the University, are very poor. From these it is difficult for me to say that anything substantial has been achieved so far as this department is concerned. Of course when a layman like me must say that there is something substantial, something substantial for the people must be achieved. This is a land of various

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herbs. This is a land of various plants. This is a land where we must concentrate all our efforts to improve our systems of food and find out some synthetic food out of tapioca and other materials *i. e.* a proper synthetic, cheap and healthy food for hundreds and thousands of our people. Such being the case, the University ought to have been by this time in a position to find out some synthetic form of food, out of tapioca composed of some other materials also. If this has been done by this time it would have been a matter for consolation for men like me. I do not say that these results can be achieved overnight. But as a matter of fact, if attempts have been made in that direction, that is in the matter of food materials consumed by people, it would have been of very great consolation for men like me.

Unfortunately I cannot find much in this Report towards that consummation. Research on tapioca is the first subject mentioned in the Report.

> "A fifteen acre plot near the Guest House was secured on lease from Government for conducting the field investigation on tapioca. A field laboratory and a few sheds have been constructed. The Head quarters of the Economic Botanist was shifted from Kayamkulam to Trivandrum so that he may devote greater attention to this work. Manurial and cultural experiments are in progress"

If any tangible result has been obtained in the matter it would have been a matter for gratification for the people. We may say that there has been successful research. But unfortunately there is not any enlightenment on that topic in the Report published by the University.

Then again the Subject No. 3 is plantains.

> "Fifteen local varieties and fifty-seven varieties from an 'All India Collection' at Coimbatore have been planted in a part of the Tapioca farm for purposes of comparative study."

I do not know what the research has yielded. So many of us have done likewise arranging and planting of plantains. But what after all does this stand for on a better footing than what has been attempted to be done by a layman like myself?

DR. K. L. MOUDGILL: Would the honourable member like to come and see this Tapioca Farm this evening, Sir?

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: I may tell my honourable friend that I have attempted to visit it more than once. I may be pardoned when I say I have not been struck by the results. I do not mean any disparagement to anybody.

DR. K. L. MOUDGILL: Has the honourable member visited it, Sir?

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: I cannot stand any trial or cross examination now. But I request my friend to accept what I have stated. I have to offer similar observations regarding items Nos. 4, 5 and 6. I offer these observations in no spirit of disparagement. But I, as a member of this House, am entitled to ask the representatives of the University what is the substantial result of which we may be proud of in the name of the University.

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Looking over the various items that are published in this Report I must candidly confess that the result is not very encouraging. It may be very encouraging from the standpoint of scientists. But when viewed from the standpoint of a layman like me, the result is not very encouraging. I certainly will be grateful to the representatives of the University if they correct me and show that I am wrong.

Now, one thing is clear, so far as my information goes and it is this. The number of research students for 1120 is published in page 22 of the Report. There are 21 students for Chemistry, 3 for Physics, 3 for Botany, 5 for Zoology, 7 for Marine Biology and Fisheries, 3 for Public Health and 4 for Statistics. If it has been stated in the Report how many have been working, in previous years, when they began their research, what were the lines of their activity and what is the result of the work turned out by each, it would have been a matter of enlightenment. I am putting this question to the representatives of the University for this reason. My own information is that only very few students stick to continue there. Some students go there just as so many of the students after completion of the University studies join the Law College. Now as a way out they go to the Research Department if, as a matter of fact, entry into Research Department is possible under the existing rules. They do not stick to the place. Some have become quilt drivers in the Huzur Office. Some have gone outside the country. Most of them go in search of other employment elsewhere after a few months. My submission is that this is not at all very useful from the standpoint of research. Research, if it must yield good results, must be conducted by men with a religious spirit. Without sticking to the work and continuing year after year it is not worth being called a research at all. Is it a matter for child's play? Can you enter research just as you enter into a museum? The work must be taken with a proper spirit and continued year after year until tangible results are achieved. But that is not the case here. There again I must say, I would be very much grateful if I am corrected.

We must look for the reason why Research Students do not stick to the Department. I am told that the stipends offered are very low. With all the religious spirit necessary for research, you cannot continue there with hungry stomachs. Research scholars cannot starve. The stipends offered are pitifully low. Therefore I would suggest if the University is serious about this matter, serious about having an excellent research work, it should not be counted by the number of research scholars. It would be ample if there are two or three scholars. What is the use of having a number of scholars? That is not going to yield any tangible result either. What we want is men with proper aptitude and spirit. Therefore my suggestion is that stipend might be increased in such a way as to attract scholars for a long period.

Then again another thing which I have to point out is this.

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RAJYASEVANIRATA S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR (*Deputy President*): Honourable member has one minute more.

MR. T. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: May I not continue to the end of the hour? Practically the day is to be over.

There are so many Departments about which there is mention in the Report. Of course, our friend who represents the Research Department has been the Professor in one branch *viz.* Chemistry. Then there are various other subjects such as Botany and Zoology. There is no sufficient supervision in respect of these branches. The reputation of the respective professors attached to these particular subjects in the University has been unfortunately not very much. There were times when the Professors in the Trivandrum College had very, very great reputation; we were proud of having been students under great Professors like Dr. Sloss and Mr. Krishnaswami Iyer. Unfortunately it has so come about that the University has lost much of its prestige. Selection to the highest posts in the University very often does not depend upon merit, but on so many other factors, mention of which will not enhance the prestige of this University.

RAJYASEVANIRATA S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR: Mr. Madhavan.

MR. E. K. MADHAVAN: Sir, I have very great pleasure in supporting the measure sponsored by Mr. Velappan Nair.

RAJYASEVANIRATA S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR: Order, order. The House will now adjourn and meet again at 11 a. m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5 P. M.

S. VAIDYANATHA AIYAR,
Secretary to the Sri Mulam Assembly.

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